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24 March 1965

DCI BRIEFING FOR
HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

THE CONGO

- I. The over-all military situation in the Congo continues to be favorable.
 - A. The Congolese Army/mercenary offensive to "seal" the northeastern frontier began from Bunia on 15 March, and has met little resistance so far. Most tribes in the area dislike the rebels.
 - B. The main mercenary column is on the outskirts of Aru, the principal entry point of arms going to the Congolese rebels from Uganda. Because of this, the rebels may try to make a stand there.
 - C. There is some evidence of foreign "volunteers," perhaps 200, gathering near Aru. None has appeared so far, however.
 - D. Another moderately large government force is at Paulis. This one is patrolling the area roundabout, and also is getting a mostly favorable reception from local tribesmen.

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E. Several thousand rebels armed with modern Communist-manufactured weapons still roam the northeast, however, and they are expected to continue to resist for some time to come.

F. Stanleyville, once the rebel capital, is quiet.

II. Militarily, one particularly dark spot remains on the horizon. This is in the Fizi area on Lake Tanganyika, over which Communist-made arms are smuggled from Kigoma, a lake town in Tanzania.

A. A concentration of several thousand rebels is said to be gathered there. Recently, they have defeated a number of local government detachments, which have low morale and are accompanied by only a handful of mercenaries.

B. A Congolese lake patrol has finally started up. This may choke off some of the arms shipments.

III. Outside assistance to the insurgents continues.

A. Two Egyptian AN-12s landed in Dar es Salaam in Tanzania early this month. Their cargoes apparently were shipped to Kigoma.

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- B. Five Soviet and one Bulgarian arms-carrying aircraft have also landed in Dar recently -- an unusual event -- but the destination of their cargoes is unclear.
- C. Arms deliveries for the rebels via Sudan appear to be starting up again, after an almost six-week hiatus.
1. Three Egyptian AN-12s have landed in Juba in the southern Sudan in the last week. Juba is the town where the majority of the 60 known cargo planes (Algerian, Egyptian and Ghanaian) believed to be delivering arms to the rebels have landed.
 2. Overland shipments through the Sudan also seems to have begun. A rail shipment is reported to have arrived in the southern Sudan on 10 March. The arms apparently came from Port Sudan on the Red Sea, where late last month an arms-carrying freighter docked, having put into an Egyptian port

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two days earlier.

D. Despite protestations to the contrary, Uganda continues to aid the rebels, though far less openly than before.

1. Uganda had sent company-sized infantry units into the Congo in mid-February, but these have since been withdrawn.

2. On 11 March, a planeload of fifty soldiers landed at Arua (in Uganda opposite Aru) to join the Congolese rebels. Who the soldiers were is as yet unknown.

3. Ugandan Prime Minister Obote's adventures in the Congo are far from popular domestically.

D. Nasir and Algeria's Ben Bella continue to be the biggest arms suppliers. They reportedly are financially supported in their endeavors by the USSR.

IV. At home, Tshombé is in the driver's seat and more popular than ever.

A. Congolese provincial and national elections are in progress--they will last until the end of April--and it seems likely Tshombé's

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party (really a grouping of parties) will do well.

- B. He denies he wants to run against incumbent President Kasavubu, but this is far from sure. The presidential choice is to be made by an electoral college before next fall.

V. Generally, we are optimistic about the short term prospects in the Congo.

- A. Unless foreign "volunteers" arrive, the mercenaries should prevail.
- B. For the first time some African moderates are lining up on the Congo Government's side diplomatically.
- C. Long run prospects are less certain.
 - 1. The radical Africans, backed by the USSR seem disposed to keep the pot boiling for the indefinite future.
 - 2. The Congo's basic problems--economic and social--continue to be enormous, and it seems likely that any Congolese Government--radical, moderate or what-have you--will need substantial outside assistance for some time to come to remain viable.

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